

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TORONT 02224 252101Z
ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL TORONTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6147
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMCONSUL QUEBEC

UNCLAS TORONTO 2224

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, SOPN, CA
SUBJ: TORONTO STAR CLAIMS PQ PROPOSING LOADED REFERENDUMN

1. IN ITS LEAD EDITORIAL AUGUST 25 "QUEBEC LOADS THE REFERENDUM DICE," THE STAR CLAIMED THAT THE LEVESQUE GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF "BRITISH FAIR PLAY" IN THE RULES FOR THE PROPOSED REFERENDUM WHEREAS THE RULES PROPOSED AUGUST 24 ACTUALLY "WOULD LOAD THE DICE HEAVILY IN FAVOR OF QUEBEC'S SEPARATISTS."

2. THE STAR CLAIMED HHAT WHILE THERE IS APPARENT BALANCE IN PUBLIC-SUPPORTED COMMITTEES ON EACH SIDE OF THE ISSUE, SUCH EVENNESS DOES NOT EXIST IN PRACTICE. FIRST, THE ABILITY TO ORGANIZE ALL THE GROUPS OPPOSING SEPARATISM INTO ONE EFFECTIVE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION IS CONSIDERED QUESTIONABLE BY THE STAR, AND A MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN VIEW OF THE ILLEGALITY OF SPENDING BY ANY ANTI-SEPARATIST GROUP OUTSIDE THE FORMAL ORGANIZATION. SECOND, THE PLAN HAS NO PROVISION FOR PARTICIPATION BY CANADIANS OUTSIDE QUEBEC.

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3. THE STAR NOTED THE SUBTLETY IN THE QUEBEC WHITE PAPER SUGGESTING THAT THE REFERENDUM PLAN IS "SIMPLY COPYING THE METHODS USED WHEN BRITAIN HELD A REFERENDUM ON STAYING IN THE COMMON MARKET."

4. "IF THE QUEBEC REFERENDUM IS TO HAVE ANY VALIDITY IT WILL HAVE TO BE BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT EVERY

CANADIAN HAS A RIGHT TO MAKE HIS OR HER VOICE HEARD
IN A DECISION THAT AFFECTS PEOPLE OUTSIDE QUBEC AS
MUCH AS THOSE WHO LIVE WITHIN THE PROVINCE.

"RENE LEVESQUE AND HIS FOLLOWERS MAY BE ABLE TO
CONGRATULATE THEMSELVES ON THEIR CLEVERNESS, BUT
THEY SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO POSE AS DEMOCRATS FOLLOWING
THE BRITISH SENSE OF FAIR PLAY.

"THE RULES THEY PROPOSE ARE NOT FAIR, BUT ARE IN-
TENDED TO STIFLE OPPOSITION. UNLESS THE RULES ALLOW
FULL PARTICIPATION BY ALL SHADES OF OPINION, THE RESULTS
WILL CARRY NO WEIGHT."

DIGGINS

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Message Attributes

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